

**REMARKS**

Applicants request favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's willingness to conduct an Interview in this case, which was held on July 9, 2003. During the Interview, the Applicants' representative and the Examiner discussed potential claim amendments that would overcome the outstanding rejections of independent claims 1 and 13, and the Examiner agreed that such amendments would overcome the outstanding rejections. Applicants have chosen one of the potential amendments for each of claims 1 and 13 that were discussed. Accordingly, Applicants assert that outstanding rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-11, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious when considering U.S. Patent No. 6,357,518 ("Sugimoto") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,354,368 ("Nishishita") should be withdrawn.

In addition, during the Interview the Examiner indicated that the previously withdrawn claims would become allowable if the base claims, *i.e.*, claim 1 and 13 were deemed allowable and generic. In this regard, Applications are reinstating previously withdrawn claims 3, 12, and 14-24 as new claims 26-38, and request that they be allowed with the claims 1 and 13.

Finally, the amendments made in the present reply are being made for purposes of expediting the prosecution of the present application, and should not be taken as acquiescence in the Examiner's position. Applicants may file a continuation application in this regard.

**CONCLUSION**

For the reasons stated above, claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13, and 26-38 are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if such communication would expedite the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

JUL 11 2003

Date

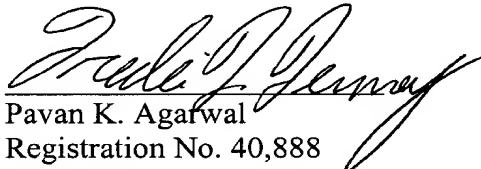
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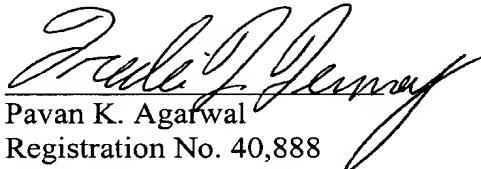


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THE COMMISSIONER IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE ANY ADDITIONAL FEES WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED REGARDING THIS APPLICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, OR CREDIT ANY OVERPAYMENT, TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 19-0741. SHOULD NO PROPER PAYMENT BE ENCLOSED HEREWITH, AS BY A CHECK BEING IN THE WRONG AMOUNT, UNSIGNED, POST-DATED, OTHERWISE IMPROPER OR INFORMAL OR EVEN ENTIRELY MISSING, THE COMMISSIONER IS AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE THE UNPAID AMOUNT TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 19-0741. IF ANY EXTENSIONS OF TIME ARE NEEDED FOR TIMELY ACCEPTANCE OF PAPERS SUBMITTED HEREWITH, APPLICANT HEREBY PETITIONS FOR SUCH EXTENSION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.136 AND AUTHORIZES PAYMENT OF ANY SUCH EXTENSIONS FEES TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 19-0741.